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Boles speaks about institute

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An operation that began with a failure, then achieved success in related fields, was discussed at th Tuesday meeting of the Waynesboro Kiwanis Club.

Guest speaker at the meeting was Michael Boles, director of corporate development for the Monroe Institute in Nellysford.

He described how government incentives in the 1950s led founder Robert A. Monroe into research into the field of sleep learning. Although his research was less than successful, it led Monroe into the use of specific sound frequencies for stress reduction, work focus, sleep disorders and similar problems.

The work is built on the idea of hemispheric synchronization, use of different sound frequencies to coordinate the left and right hemispheres of the brain, Boles told the group.

These developments serve as a catalyst, he said. With training, a client can learn self-control of brainwaves to produce the same effects. The institute has served about 8,000 resident clients since 1979 and also markets a variety of products for self-help.

Clients include a growing number of Fortune 500 companies as well as government executives. Their primary goal is to learn to work in a non-stressful manner, he said. The program helps them direct their thinking process, filtering out "mental chatter" that is frequently distractful.

There are even applications in the area of sports. One product, which got a laugh from Kiwanians addicted to hitting a little white ball with a stick, is intended to lead to non-stressful golf.

The research is also integrated into background music in hospitals and medical offices to reduce stress among patients and there is continuing research in the area of pain reduction.